

# The "NET"

## BUSINESS WATCH

# Goin' Phishing



Identity theft continues to be a crime problem for the citizens of the State of Nebraska. The Federal Trade Commission Identity Theft Data Clearinghouse reports that between January and December of 2003, 781 Nebraskans reported being victims of an identity theft. The highest percentage of victims fall into the 18-29 age group. In more than half of these cases the ID theft was used to set up a credit card or bank fraud.

There is a new scheme used by con artists to attempt to steal your identity called "phishing." The most common means of "phishing" is by e-mail, but it's possible to have it happen by phone. By representing themselves as a legitimate retailer, banker or a government agency, the ID thieves ask the victim to "confirm" some personal information. To obtain your Social Security number, bank account number or PIN number the "phisher" may tell you that your account is about to be closed, an order has been placed in your name or your information has been lost due to a computer failure and they need your help to correct the problem. These thieves will also represent themselves as being with the fraud departments of well-known companies and will ask for you information because they think that you may be the victim of identity theft.

The "phisher" will send you an e-mail that appears to come from a legitimate company or agency. If you click on the link requesting your personal information it will take you to a phony web site. These web sites will look just like the web sites of a number of real companies or agencies, right down to the companies official logo. If you follow their instructions you will be providing these people with just the information they need to steal your identity. You may also get a phone call from someone pretending to be with a company or an agency, asking for the same personal information and using the same false claims.

To determine if the email is from a real company, call them directly after obtaining the phone number from the phone book. You can also use your favorite search engine to find the real company's official web site. Legitimate credit card companies may contact you if they find an unusual pattern in the use of your card that would indicate someone else was using the card. But, their question would deal with whether you had made a particular transaction, not your account number or personal information. It's possible that a law enforcement agency could contact you if they found that you were a victim of a fraud. It is a good idea to get the name and employee number of anyone calling from a law enforcement agency and call the agency, using a phone number you know to belong to the agency, to verify the legitimacy of the caller.

Job seekers can also be a target of these "phishers," if the job seekers list themselves on job search sites. Posing as a potential employer, they will ask for your social security number and other personal information. Always verify the identity of the person you are dealing with before you provide any personal information.

**Year to Date Statistics****1/1/04 to 11/31/04****Robbery**

NW - 6

NE - 9

CE - 9

SW - 9

SE - 7

**Commercial Burglary**

NW - 98/14

NE - 101/6

CE - 92/14

SW - 76/8

SE - 123/15

**Forgery**

NW - 365/238

NE - 358/252

CE - 122/68

SW - 202/131

SE - 353/221

**Shoplifting**

NW - 311/239

NE - 410/319

CE - 108/55

SW - 279/212

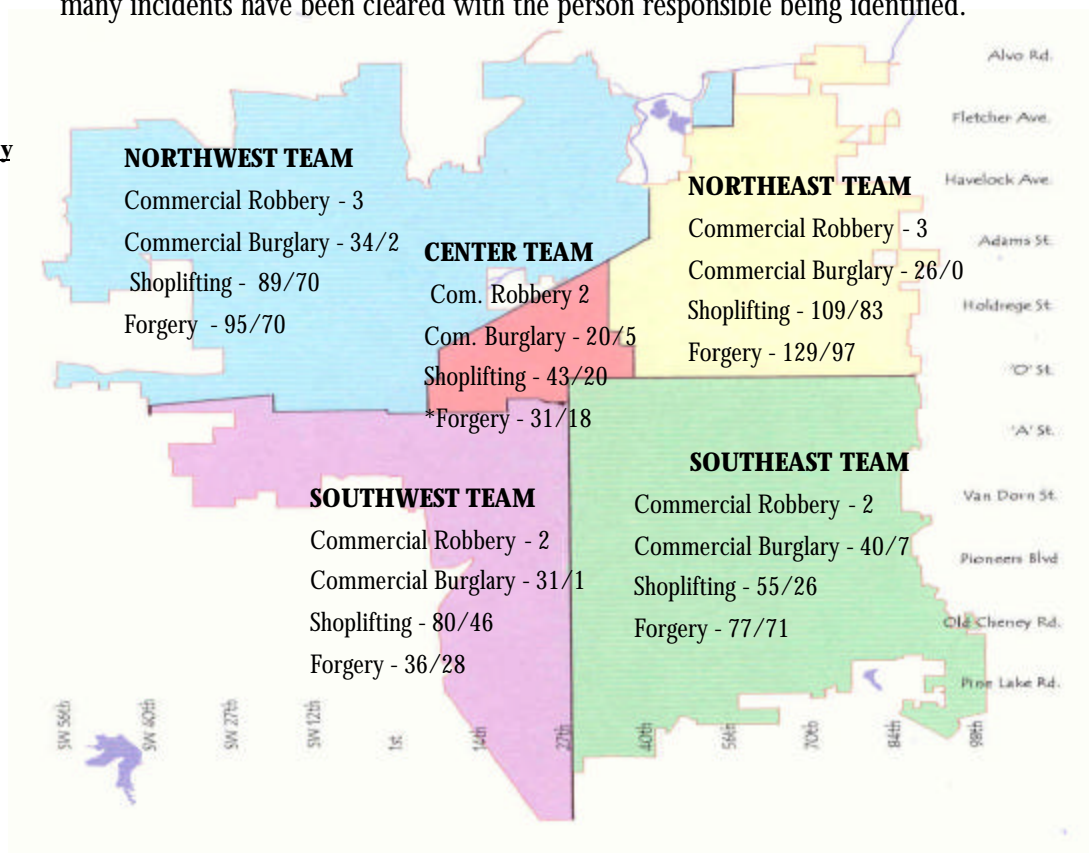
SE - 272/222

**CRIME TRENDS**

From 9-1-2004 to 11-31-2004

For more information about the crime trends in your neighborhood go to the city web site.  
**<http://www.ci.lincoln.ne.us/city/police>**

The first number will be the number of reported incidents. The second number is how many incidents have been cleared with the person responsible being identified.

**TEAM AREA CITIZEN INPUT COMMITTEES**

The Lincoln Police Department is organized in a style referred to as Community Based Policing. The city is divided into five team areas with a Captain managing each one. This style allows the officers working in those areas to respond more appropriately to needs that may be specific to only one team area. Another aspect of Community Based Policing is in the form of citizen involvement. Crime prevention programs, such as Neighborhood Watch, Business Watch, and McGruff House, are examples of police and community interaction. The police department also relies on citizen input in the form of suggestions, criticism, and joint problem solving.

Team Area Citizen Input Committees (also known as Team Citizen Advisory Councils) are a tool the Team Captains use to improve police response and service to their specific area. These committees facilitate communication between the police team and the citizens in that area. Each Team Captain or Sergeant meets periodically with their group. These meetings allow the identification of issues that are important to citizens in their team area. The meetings also include ideas from the committee to problem-solve, develop strategies, and make decisions.

Each Team Captain manages their committee differently. If you want to be involved in one of these committees you should either live in, work in, or have some special interest in that team. You also then need to contact the Captain of the team area you are interested in to get specific information. Some teams may not be in need of extra members at any given time.

Northeast Team Captain Doug Srb: 441-7752 Northwest Team Captain Steve Imes: 441-6555  
 Southwest Team Captain Bob Wilhelm: 441-7754 Center Team Captain Joy Citta: 441-7751  
 Southeast Team Captain Kim Koluch: 441-7755

# Volunteer Partners

Volunteer Partners has received funds to develop and operate the Lincoln/Lancaster County Citizen Corps through Lincoln/Lancaster County Emergency Management. The Citizen Corps creates opportunities for citizens to volunteer to help their communities prepare for and respond to emergencies. The goal is to have all citizens participate in making their communities safer, stronger, and better prepared for preventing and handling threats of terrorism, crime and disasters of all kinds. The Lincoln/Lancaster County Citizen Corps is comprised of the following area:



**Emergency Volunteer Centers (EVCs)** : Emergency Volunteer Centers are pre-designated sites that would be activated during emergency or disaster situations.

EVC volunteers are trained to operate EVCs and manage the scores of volunteers who step forward to assist in times of crisis. Volunteers operated an EVC in Princeton, NE after the Hallam tornado.



**Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)** : CERT training prepares volunteers to take care of themselves and their neighbors during emergency situations. CERT teams are trained in the areas of fire suppression, light search and rescue, disaster preparedness, and pre- and post- storm operations. This training is a great idea for any group, i.e. teachers in a school, a local business, a service club, staff at a nursing home, or a neighborhood association.



**Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS)** : This program works to enhance the capacity of state and local law enforcement to utilize volunteers. VIPS serves as a gateway to resources and information for and about law enforcement volunteer programs. They can provide training for volunteers to perform administrative and non-intervention policing activities to free up law enforcement professionals for frontline duty.



**Neighborhood and Business Watch Programs** : Neighborhood Watch is a tried program involving cooperation between citizens and the police. In Neighborhood Watch, you are encouraged to work with your neighbors and report suspicious activity and crime to the police. By investing a small amount of your time, you can become the eyes and ears of the police department, thus reducing the opportunity for you and your neighbors to become victims. The Business Watch Program establishes a formal network for concerned business persons to communicate with other businesses and the police regarding crime related problems, crime prevention and security related issues. *In Lincoln, the Neighborhood Watch and Business Watch programs are managed by the Crime Prevention Unit of the Lincoln Police Department.*



**Students Disaster Education** : The American Red Cross is providing a curriculum for schools in Lancaster County that will educate students about various emergencies and disasters that can affect the community.



For more information about Citizen Corps, available presentations or how you can become involved contact Volunteer Partners at 435-2100 or via e-mail at [emergcoord@volunteerpartners.org](mailto:emergcoord@volunteerpartners.org). You can also learn more about Citizen Corps at [www.citizencorps.gov](http://www.citizencorps.gov).

## THE "NET" BUSINESS WATCH

LINCOLN POLICE DEPARTMENT

CRIME PREVENTION GROUP

575 S. 10TH St.

Lincoln, Nebraska 68508

*Return Service*

### **\* CITIZENS ACADEMY UPDATE \***

We are **still seeking applicants** for the Spring Citizens Academy session which will begin on Thursday February 24th, 2005 and graduate on April 21st, 2005.

In our Fall issue of "THE NET" we outlined the program about the classroom and hands-on activities you would be involved in. **That issue also gave our web-site address where you could register on-line. Since that time we have learned that we had routing problems on the web-site and if you submitted an application on-line we may not have received it. We continue to be very interested in your applications so we would like you to please call us at 441-7261 and we will make sure we have your information.**

This program is fun, informative, and one of the few where you actually get inside a government agency to see just what makes it tick.



### **Construction Site Thefts Continue**

In the last quarter of this year alone, the reported loss due to thefts from construction sites in Lincoln will run over \$76,000. The items taken involve a \$24,000 Bobcat, five portable generators, four air compressors, spray guns, nail guns, ladders, table saws, plumbing fixtures, siding, insulation and a large number of hand tools and accessories.

Construction job sites by nature can be an easy targets for thieves in that they frequently are set in new unoccupied neighborhoods, with no one to serve as a causal observer or witness. It is also no secret that at these buildings and homes that are under construction there will be high dollar equipment kept in or around them. With this in mind it is very important that contractors do the best they can to secure their valuables. If there are pickup trucks or tractor type equipment left at the site, be sure to remove all keys and consider parking them in a manner that would block an unsecured opening to a building or the doors to the construction trailer.

To best investigate a theft case we must be able to identify the property taken. The better the description we have of the items taken the better chance we have to recover them. To enter stolen property in the National Crime Information Center computer it must have a value of \$500 or above and the make, model and serial numbers of the item are needed. Marking equipment in a very obvious location and with an unique marking can make the item easier to identify and less attractive to the thief.

Developers of these new neighborhoods should encourage the home owners to become involved with Neighborhood Watch, thus providing help in keeping an "eye" on the area as it grows.